

REMARKS

The Office Action rejected Claim 1, objected to Claims 15, 18 and 20, and allowed Claims 2-4, 6, 8-11 and 13-25. For the reasons set for the below, Applicants believe that the rejection and objections should be withdrawn and that all currently pending claims are in condition for allowance.

OBJECTION TO CLAIMS 15, 18 AND 20

The Examiner objected to Claims 15, 18 and 20 for depending from cancelled claims. Claims 15, 18 and 20 have been amended to depend from currently pending claims. Claims 15 and 18 has been amended to depend from independent Claim 2. Claim 20 has been amended to depend from independent Claim 1.

REJECTION OF CLAIM 1 UNDER 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

The Examiner rejected Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,141,372 to Donner (“Donner”). In order to anticipate a claim under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), a reference must disclose each and every element of a claim. As discussed below, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1

Claim 1 requires “a first hinge leaf hingedly connected to a second hinge leaf by a pivot pin” and a pin engagement means “including a spherical surface of a given radius seated in an annular groove of a curved section, the curved section having a radius of curvature the same as said given radius so as to permit rotation of the hinge pin but prevent any axial movement of the hinge pin relative to said other hinge leaf.” (emphasis added).

Donner is directed to a coupling piece for releasably connecting containers, especially containers stacked on top of one another. As illustrated in Figure 2 of Donner, a locking bolt 21 is rotatably received in a housing 20, wherein the locking bolt 21 is rotatable within the housing 20 by an actuating slide 22 which is moveable between first and second positions. As illustrated in Figure 4, a lock-in means 57 engages with index notches 60, 61 located in the actuating slide 22 to define the first and second positions.

The actuating slide 22 is received within the housing 20 and includes a cap member at an end thereof. The cap member forms part of the actuating slide 22 and assists a user in moving the actuating slide 22 between the first and second positions. The first position and second position differ based on whether the lock-in means 57 is in contact with

index notch 60 or 61. The Examiner alleged that the housing 20 and the cap member of the actuating slide 22 of Donner disclose the first and second hinge leaf of Claim 1. Neither the housing 20 nor the cap member at the end of the actuating slide 22 are a hinge leaf for hinging a vehicle door on a vehicle body. Donner does not disclose “a first hinge leaf hingedly connected to a second hinge leaf by a pivot pin,” as required by Claim 1.

Furthermore, Donner discloses that the actuating slide 22 is arranged shiftably along its mid-axis 24 in the housing 20. Col. 3, ln. 68 thru Col. 4, ln. 2. (emphasis added). The actuating slide 22 is moveable between the first and second positions by application of force on the cap member by a user. Col. 7, ll. 35-38 and 60-68 (“By pushing the actuating slide 22 into the housing up to the index notch 61, the coupling piece reaches the locking position.”).

The Examiner alleged that the lock-in means 57 of Donner discloses the hinge pin retention means having hinge pin engagement means of Claim 1. The lock-in means 57 disclosed by Donner teaches away from Claim 1 because it allows axial movement of the actuating slide 22 relative to the housing 20. Donner does not disclose a pin engagement means including a spherical surface of a given radius seated in an annular groove of a curved section, the curved section having a radius of curvature the same as said given radius so as to permit rotation of the hinge pin but “prevent any axial movement of the hinge pin relative to said other hinge leaf,” as required by Claim 1.

Donner does not disclose each and every element of Claim 1. Accordingly, Claim 1 is patentable over Donner.

Claim 20

Claim 20 has been amended to depend from Claim 1. Accordingly, for at least the same reasons discussed above, Claim 20 is patentable over Donner.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner indicated that Claims 2-4, 6, 8-11, 13-19 and 21-24 are allowable. As discussed above, Claims 15 and 18 have been amended to depend from independent Claim 2. Accordingly, Claims 2-4, 6, 8-11, 13-19 and 21-24 should be allowed.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing remarks. If there are any issues that can be resolved via a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at 404.685.6799. No fees are believed due, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be due or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 11-0855.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brenda O. Holmes/

By: Brenda O. Holmes, Esq.
Reg. No. 40,339

KILPATRICK STOCKTON LLP
1100 Peachtree Street, Suite 2800
Atlanta, Georgia 30309
Tel: (404) 815-6500
Fax: (404) 815-6555
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